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# The Weston Democrat.

IT'S THE TRUTH THAT HURTS.

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### The Spelling School.

His name was Ephraim Blodgett; not specially renowned,
Except as champion speller, in all the country round.
Orthographical aspirants were apt to fare quite slim
At any spelling match where they encountered Ephraim.

The spelling book he had by heart, and eke the dictionary;
And science, at his tongue's end, laid its queer vocabulary.
The dubious monosyllable he'd floor with perfect ease,
And go through words sesquipedal like lightning through a cheese.

You couldn't weave a spell, with any common alphabet,
By which to capture Ephraim, or put him in a sweat;
And his admirers frequently remarked of Ephe, that he
Could spell the China-glyphics off from a chest of tea.

The people ceased to find, in spelling schools, their wonted fun;
What show was there against this orthographic gatling-gun,
That mowed down all before it, with a rat-tling fusilade
Of consonants and vowels punctilliously arrayed?

Just as the culmination of Ephraim's renown
He took part in a spelling school in an adjoining town.
Full soon the sole survivors of that orthographic war
Were Ephraim and a schoolgirl, his sole competitor.

With equal ardor, twixt these two raged the uncertain fight.
Where victory might perch, at last, was quite indefinite.
With equal nerve they came to time, and accurately placed
The insidious silent letter, and the diphthong, Jannafaced.

In vain the weird and magic spells upon that girl were cast,
The cabalistic letters dropped from her lips so fast.
Vain likewise for a long time was the effort to suppress
Ephe's "airy tongue that syllabled" tough words with such success.

The audience was excited. "Stick to him, sis!" some cried,
And "Go it, Ephe," his partisans defiantly replied.
But Ephraim was the hero of a hundred spelling schools,
And, on the whole, his prestige made him favorite in the pools.

In fact, though, they were laying for Ephraim. He got
The word, at last, that dropped him as if he had been shot;
The word that choked the Welshman when mortar from a trowel
Confused his tongue at Babel. A word without a vowel.

An ashen hue crept o'er his face when Ephraim heard her spell:
"D-m-n-r-k-gg-m-c-k-ll."
"Spell-bound upon a ragged edge of consonants!" gasped Ephe.
They buried him with his spelling book and a feeling of relief.

### LOVE OR PRIDE?

Great purple shadows swept across the hayfields; the distant landscape was becoming indistinct, and the moon was slowly rising in the heavens.

After awhile the twilight deepened into as much of darkness as there would be in the summer night, and silence fell upon the earth. Then a girl stole noiselessly across a small garden, and stood beside a gate that led into the adjoining churchyard. A yew tree spread its dark branches wide above her, but the silver tints that were slanting down upon the tall gravestones, and bringing out the delicate lines of the old church spire, touched also her white face, making it whiter than usual. She did not start as a tall figure approached from the further side of the churchyard. She had evidently been expecting some one, and when she heard the words: "You are out late, Miss Jervis," she quietly answered:

"I was waiting for you; I wanted to say good-bye to you before you went away."

"I thought you had done that already," replied the young man, with some bitterness.

"Not quite," returned the girl, wearily; "you were too angry for me to say it as I wished."

"Had I not the right to be so?" he asked. "Ever since I have been at Shelford you have been deceiving me. I believed you to be as earnest as I was myself, and now"—

He paused.

"And now?"

Her voice had a sharp ring in it as she repeated his words, as though she would give denial to what he had said; but her face looked like stone in the moonlight, white and immovable, as she continued:

"I did not understand that you could really be in earnest, otherwise I might have told you before what I have told you to-day."

"You did not believe in me—you looked on me as heartless—as a deceiver. You do not believe in me now."

"I do."

"What do you believe?" he asked, impetuously; "nothing good, or you would not give me the answer you have given me."

"Everything good except the knowing what is good for yourself. I want you now to say good-bye to me without any anger in your heart. The day will come when you will perhaps bless me for what I have had courage to do to-day." And she held out her hand.

The young man hesitated. "Is there no hope?"

"None."

Her voice rang low and clear through the summer air. Again he hesitated, then suddenly taking both her hands in his, he bent down and kissed her for the first time.

She gave a faint cry, and disengaged herself.

"We part in peace."

And with these words she turned and fled, not looking back, or perhaps she might have repented her decision.

Once in the house she sat down in the empty sitting room, made light as day by the moonbeams. The old dog rose as she came in, and when she threw herself into a chair he laid his head in her lap.

There came a sound of clattering of plates in the kitchen on the opposite side of the narrow passage, and her mother's voice sounded sharply, giving her directions about supper.

Presently she entered.

"Where have you been, Ally? How ill you look! And you're all shivering! Come into the kitchen, child; Anne's gone off to bed, and there's a bit of fire in the grate. It might be winter instead of midsummer, to feel your hands."

Alice rose mechanically. She walked dreamily into the little kitchen, where her mother drew a chair to the fire for her.

Presently a ruddy, good-humored looking youth entered, saying:

"Let me have my supper here, mother. The fire looks pleasant, though it is summer time."

Mrs. Jervis opened the oven door and took out a covered dish that had been kept warm there. Alice, watching her as she placed it on the table and laid a knife and fork beside it, instinctively roused herself, and taking a jug from the dresser went to the cellar to draw some beer for her brother.

It was a relief to her to perform this menial service. It seemed almost an answer to the question she had been asking herself over and over again since her conversation with Mr. Scrope in the morning. She was even glad that all around her looked so commonplace, so poor—poorer and commoner than ever to-night. And a bitter feeling rose in her heart and made her almost indignant that some people should be so much more favored in a worldly point of view than others.

When she went to her room, instead of undressing, she opened the window and gazed out towards the yew tree under which she had parted with Mr. Scrope, and then suddenly untwisting her long hair she turned to the looking-glass, not with any feeling of vanity, but in order to find what had so attracted him.

It was more than a handsome face that answered back her gaze, one which showed an amount of earnestness and intelligence not often met with. Of this she was no judge herself, neither of the continual change of expression which Mr. Scrope had begun by curiously observing, and ended by being thoroughly interested in. He was passing his vacation at Shelford, reading and fishing, and had made the acquaintance of William Jervis on the banks of the river, and through him, whom it was a condescension on the part of Mr. Scrope to notice, of Alice herself.

Alice perhaps understood the footing on which they stood better than her brother, and the innate pride in her nature caused her to accept it with reservations. She felt the gulf between them and measured it by the world's standard. Therefore when Mr. Scrope made his somewhat startling offer she, in spite of her surprise, was not unprepared with her answer.

And now that she had given it, she asked herself if she had done right.

Mr. Scrope was an only son; a brilliant future was before him; a world of which she knew nothing was familiar to him. Could she, who was accustomed to the littlenesses incident to circumstances somewhat above actual poverty, move with propriety in circles accustomed to every luxury? Would his relatives, so far above hers, accept her and her belongings? She answered, "No." Mr. Scrope had argued—what matter since it rested with him to give her place and position in the world as his wife? But that she knew would be a separation for him from all former associations, and her own unfitness to move in her lover's sphere would make her a clog upon the life of him to whom, before she knew it, she had given her heart.

Such had been the train of argument she had pursued, and she had struggled free from the prospect open to her not without pain, and had dismissed it as a dream of beauty that had naught to do with waking hours. And now—

But it was over. The morning rose, and she went about her tasks as usual, perhaps even more energetically, since she needed an outlet for her pent-up feelings. Mingled with pain there came a sense of happiness in the knowledge of Mr. Scrope's love. To have it—nay, perhaps to possess it still—carried her into another world, in which, however, she must always be alone, since all that had passed must forever remain her own especial secret.

* * * * *

Mr. Scrope went abroad; and after a time he returned home to begin his career.

Alice Jervis pursued her homely and monotonous life. She grew quieter and graver, and worked more diligently. She believed that she had decided rightly as regarded Mr. Scrope's happiness, and the sacrifice she had made for his sake made her feel that she had a right to be interested in him, and she lived in the excitement of seeing his name in the papers and in gaining every particular of him within her grasp. She smiled when she read his name among the presentations at court or noted his presence at the court balls. At such times she looked down at the shabby dress and the poor appointments surrounding her, and wondered what sort of an appearance she would have made in other circumstances.

At length she saw another announcement. Mr. Scrope was going to be married.

She turned pale, and put down the paper.

And yet she had expected this announcement—had looked for it day after day. Nevertheless, she felt a strange pang, which as long as he was unmarried she had escaped.

Down by the river, where the water-flags hoisted their yellow standards among the reeds, and where the forget-me-nots blossomed along the banks, she sauntered, listening to the murmuring waters, whose burden was "Past, past, past." Even Rover appeared to understand it, for he looked up into her face and whined.

The great gray bars of clouds spread across the setting sun and blotted out the sunlight; but still Alice paced up and down under the pollard willows until the evening was far advanced. Night was setting in around her; the light and life were over. She had scarcely realized until the present moment how present Mr. Scrope had been in her every thought.

The morning after reading the news in the papers another very startling piece of information came to her:

She was an heiress.

By one of those strange chances in life that are so common nowadays, her mother's brother, beginning life as an artisan, had amassed a princely fortune. And he left it between Alice Jervis and her brother.

And Alice Jervis sat down and wept bitterly. To her it had come as a mockery. Her lot in life was cast, what did she want with money now?

In due time she read of the marriage itself; she cut it out of the paper and placed it in her pocketbook. It was all over.

* * * * *

Three years slipped away. Three travelers entered an hotel in a little foreign town. One, a beautiful woman, a little past her first youth, whom one knew in a moment, in spite of the improvement that had taken place; but her brother was scarcely to be recognized. A tutor and three years of foreign life had caused a marvelous transformation. The third, an elderly lady, was not much altered, excepting that her dress was handsome as heart could desire.

They took their places at the *table d'hote*, and exactly opposite to them sat a lady and gentleman. The latter looked wearied, and his short black mustache twitched with the curving of the restless mouth beneath it. The lady was fair, fashionable, and vivacious.

Alice Jervis started. She would have moved, but William Jervis, all ignorant of past events, had exclaimed:

"Mr. Scrope!"

Mr. Scrope looked across, wondering at the friendly recognition from an apparent stranger. Then his eye fell upon Alice and he started, but quickly recovering himself he bowed, saying:

"Pardon me if I did not at first remember you."

Mrs. Scrope had turned in delight toward William Jervis.

"The first English voice, excepting my husband's, that I have heard for three weeks. I do not understand Italian, and have consequently had no one to talk to but Mr. Scrope. Can you imagine anything more dreadful!"

Then turning to her husband she said: "You must introduce me to your English friends."

"Mrs. Scrope—Mrs. and Miss Jervis," said Mr. Scrope, his look riveted on Alice.

The face that had never left his memory in spite of his marriage, had grown to a higher beauty than even he had imagined to be possible. And, though he knew it not, it had come about through her striving after an ideal that she deemed worthy of him.

Stilling the pulses that throbbed so painfully, Alice conversed with him as with an old acquaintance, and yet the remembrance of their parting on that moonlight night was vividly present to both of them.

Mrs. Scrope talked incessantly, the more especially as William Jervis was a lively talker, with a frank, half-jesting, half-deferential manner that had something very winning in it.

Alice Jervis watched Mrs. Scrope narrowly, and wondered why Mr. Scrope had married her. And instinctively the answer came, because he did not care very much about her, but found that the alliance would add luster to his career. There was something paradoxical in the idea, but it passed with her. She had argued that if Mr. Scrope had really cared for herself, to care much for Mrs. Scrope was impossible.

So they met, and so they parted, in the little out-of-the-way Italian town; and Alice had seen Mr. Scrope once more. Was she glad or sorry?

The Scropes returned to England—the Jervises remained abroad. And they heard nothing more of one another.

* * * * * * *

Exactly why she had come there she could not tell. It was more to gratify an old longing than for any definite reason, though she had persuaded herself into the belief that she had business at Shelford. At any rate, upon the anniversary of that day, eight years ago, when she had waited under the yew-tree to say good-bye to Mr. Scrope, Alice Jervis stood with her hand on the wicket-gate, quietly reviewing her life, and once again asking herself whether love or pride had had the greater part in her decision.

The branches of the yews were waving gently, the roses were rustling their silver-tipped leaves, and the white moonlight fell upon the graves. Still with her hand upon the garden gate, she looked towards the church, trying to believe that the years had stood still, and she was there waiting for Mr. Scrope.

She was turning away when a dark figure approached her and a well-remembered voice said:

"Miss Jervis!"

"Mr. Scrope!"

"Yes; I was waiting for you. I wished to see you before you went away."

Almost her own words in their last interview.

She looked up at him half fearfully. It was so strange to see him there at that hour of night, and an almost superstitious awe crept over her.

"I wanted to tell you that you have ruined my life so far. I heard that you were at Shelford. I knew that you would be here to-night, and I have come to ask you if you repent the past, and are willing to atone for it."

Alice shrank back.

"Mr. Scrope!" was all she could say.

"The inferiority, if there be any, is on my side," he said; "you have improved the past—I have wasted it. Yet the wasting of it I lay to your charge. I knew you better than you knew yourself. I wanted a wife who would understand me, and would give me sympathy. You could have done this, and you refused it. Will you refuse it now?"

Bewildered, and yet indignant, Alice shrank further away from him.

"Mr. Scrope," she said, "I bid you go back to your wife. I bid you to repair the brilliant prospects you seem so wrongly to have marred."

"I wish I could," he answered, sorrowfully. "My wife is dead, Alice, or I should not be here to-night. She died two years ago. You are hard and unjust as you have ever been."

"Dead!" stammered Alice. "How could I know? I have but just returned to England." She moved nearer to him; she held out her hand. "Forgive me," she said.

And their eyes met; and Mr. Scrope, looking down into hers, stooped and kissed the quivering lips for the second *time in his life.*

### Wonderful Retention of Heat.

The following statement is from the Virginia City (Nevada) *Enterprise:* On the 30th of October last, about two o'clock in the afternoon, the large air-shaft of the Belcher mine, then completed to the 1,000-foot level, took fire and was destroyed. The timbers of the shaft all burned out, and the rock fell in and blocked it up. After deliberation it was thought that it would be better and cheaper to sink a new shaft than to try to clear out the old one, so badly were its sides caved and so great was the quantity of rock that had tumbled into it. The new shaft was sunk a short distance to the west of the old one. It has now reached a point to the 1,000-foot level, where it will be continued down on an incline. The incline was started at the 1,000 foot level, and carried up to meet the vertical portion of the shaft. The course of this incline carried it through the remains of the old vertical shaft, but as soon as it was tapped the men found they could do nothing in it on account of the ashes, burned earth, and rocks that poured down into the incline. A tunnel was then run until it had reached a point a short distance west of the old shaft, when a vertical upraise was made to the line of the proposed incline to be run up to meet the new shaft. The men then began working down on the incline in order to meet the point from which they were driven in trying to come up. They have succeeded in getting into the bottom of the old shaft, where, much to their surprise, they find the rock still red hot. In trying to put in timbers they were set on fire, and in order to work at all it is found necessary to bring a line of hose into the place and play a stream of water upon the rocks wedged in the bottom of the old shaft. There is no timber on fire among the rocks. They seem to have been heated to a degree so intense at the the time of the fire that they have remained red hot ever since. Nearly three years after the great fire in the Yellow Jacket mine places were found in the lower levels where the the rock was still red hot.

### Domestic Barbering.

You can always tell a boy whose mother cuts his hair. Not because the edges of the hair look as if they had been chewed off by an absent-minded horse, but you tell it by the way he stops on the street and wiggles his shoulders. When a fond mother has to cut her boy's hair, she is careful to avoid any annoyance and muss by laying a sheet on the carpet. It has never yet occurred to her to set him on a bare floor and put the sheet around his neck. Then she draws the front hair over his eyes and leaves it there while she cuts that which is at the back.

The hair which lies over his eyes appears to be on fire. She has unconsciously continued to push his head forward until his nose presses his breast, and is too busily engaged to notice the snuffling sound that is becoming alarmingly frequent. In the meantime he is seized with an irresistible desire to blow his nose, but recollects that his handkerchief is in the other room. There is a fly lights on his nose, and does it so unexpectedly that he involuntarily dodges, and catches the points of the shears in his left ear. At this he commences to cry and wish he was a man.

But his mother doesn't notice him. She merely hits him on the other ear to inspire him with confidence. When she is through, she holds his jacket collar back from his neck, and with her mouth blows the short bits from the top of his head down his back. He calls her attention to this fact, but she looks for a new place on his head and hits him there, and asks him why he didn't use his handkerchief. Then he takes his awfully disfigured head to the mirror and looks at it, and, young as he is, shudders as he thinks of what the boys on the street will say.

### Among the Pygmies.

From accounts it would appear that Col. Long's present expedition into Africa at the head of the Egyptian troops relates to explorations among that most interesting people whom Schweinfurth has made known to the world—the Niam-Niam, or Pygmies of Equatorial Africa. This singular tribe of men are mentioned as far back in history as by Ptolemy, and frequent allusions have been made to them by various travelers ever since. They are the smallest race of men of good proportions known on earth, and but few specimens have ever been seen by scientific eyes. It will be remembered that Schweinfurth attempted to bring one of these creatures with him down to Lower Egypt, but he perished on his first contact with civilization. Whether his skeleton was preserved for science we are not informed. These little creatures seem as malignant and wicked as they are abnormal in size. They are reputed to be the most irreclaimable cannibals in Central Africa, and Schweinfurth's account of their habits and those of neighboring tribes in this respect, are the most disgusting that have anywhere been given of any branch of the human race. If the long-looked-for "missing link" ever is to be discovered between the savage and the animal, anthropologists will certainly look for it among this vicious and pygmy race.

STEALING.—The following is one of the efforts at poetry of Mason, arrested in New York for passing counterfeit money:

"A little stealing is a dangerous part,
But stealing largely is a noble art.
Of his good name 'tis mean to rob a man,
But stealing millions makes a Congress-man."

### The "Poetry" Drawer.

About this time every year there is a house-cleaning *soiree* around the office of a daily newspaper. The cobwebs are brushed down, some kalsomining done, a little paint applied, and the "head editor" turns the "poetry" drawer of his table wrong side up and sighs a still small sigh as he regards the scores of rejected manuscripts. Almost every day for the past year he has tossed poetry into the waste-basket with liberal hand, and yet here is enough to fill a book. Some have been saved to be returned, but were never called for; others have a ray or two of merit; others were laid aside out of compliment to the author, who is level-headed on all other matters.

Ah! the crushed hopes buried in this heap! The young, the old, matron, maid, bachelor and Benedict have contributed. Some were thirsting for fame, others had an hour to spare, and nineteen out of twenty have written at the bottom of the last page: "I know you like good poetry," or, "Please publish this in a conspicuous place."

Some time last fall a young lady, sitting at her chamber window when she ought to have been in bed, saw the cold clouds drive by and heard the October winds wailing on the house-top, and she ran after the ink-bottle and dashed off a pound or two of rhyme, commencing with:

"This autumn eve the winds are blowing,
The phantom clouds are floating by,
Like rivers o'er the rockiets flowing,
Then"—

But that's enough. When a stone is called a "stonelet," and a brick is called a "bricklet," such poetry will be worth a dollar a line.

Next comes a long letter headed: "What a Little Girl Thinks." No one will ever know from that letter what she thought. The ink was heavily diluted with water, the pen was as fine as a pin, and the man who succeeded in deciphering it would have had his eyes ruined forever.

The next is more poetry. Some poor girl's brother went to war, and happening to remember it she tunes her lyre and sings:

"Our Edward was a noble youth
When from his happy mother's home
He passed, in soldier's garb unsouth,
And left our heartstone sad and lone."

It appears from the above that Edward's mother was happy, but as to Edward's own feelings there is no clew. He passed, but whether he passed to Canada or the Potomac no one knows, though charity supposes that he died on the battle-field. Some of the soldiers looked spruce enough in their uniforms, but it seems that Edward's "garb" had an uncouth appearance.

Requiems are always in order. When a poet can't tackle anything else he can always make a strike on a requiem. About the middle of November is the time to get up requiems on the dying year. This one came in about that time. The author says:

"Filled is the air with snowflakes,
As pure as the mind of a bride,
In snowy white, on a morning bright,
In youthful beauty and pride."

It is a sad thing to look upon a snow storm, especially if the wood pile is lying around loose in the back yard and the police are determined to enforce the snow ordinance. Further on he says "the winter's winds are cold," but if he has any doubt of it the American public will put up a heap of money on it.

Poetry again. It is headed: "Alone," and the author says it is original. She's a young lady, and she trills:

"All alone in the twilight lighted room
I'm watching the shadows come and go,
Like the restless tide with its ebb and flow,
But darker than night is my sad heart's gloom."

Poor girl! It's dull business looking for shadows in a dark room. And what could have ailed her heart that a breach of promise suit wouldn't have swept away?

And here are two pages on "Last Rites." It's a woman's hand again, and she says:

"Lay her upon her bier—
The summer, lately dead."

It is a sad thing to have summer pass away. No more hanging over the gate, no more strawberry short-cake—farewell to peaches and cream! The girl undoubtedly felt sad, but she wasn't half as melancholy as her father, who knew that he'd got to lay in ten tons of coal and unnumbered potatoes and cabbages.

The next is on "The Flag We Love," and a young man must have worked on it until three o'clock in the morning! He says that he adores the star-spangled banner, and that he wants to die with its folds covering him. Flags are so cheap that he can keep one on hand to be ready for emergencies.

The next one starts off and inquires:

"Where are the birdies we used to see?"

That's the question, and as she does not answer it she cannot expect any one else to bother his head. Boys have a habit of "pegging" at birds, and perhaps the worm crop was a failure and the songsters had to hunt up fresh fields and pastures new.

Ah! well. There's dozens of pages left, and it will answer every purpose if they are sent to the rag-mill. If it were a capital offense to put rhymes together every hangman would be killed by overwork within a month.—*Detroit Free Press.*

### A Terrible Joke.

There have been such a number of cases in which the perpetration of senseless and wretched jokes has led to very lamentable results, that a very strong argument might be made therefrom in favor of a law against the dangerous exercise of this propensity. A young girl, who had been attending revival meetings, returned to her home in a highly agitated state of mind occasioned by what had been wrought upon her feelings by the exciting scenes witnessed at the "revival," which fact suggested to some of her heedless friends an opportunity for fun. Accordingly, one of them dressed herself in flowing, white robes, and with spreading muslin wings fastened to her shoulders and her face whitened, stole softly into the girl's room in the night. The girl awoke to find what she did not doubt was an angel standing by the side of the bed. She screamed in terror, and the other girls ran into the room, expecting to end the exploit with laughter; but she had been frightened literally out of her senses, and had to be taken to an insane asylum.

### In Cases of Apoplexy.

Apoplexy is becoming so frequent that the following hints by a well-known physician for treatment in cases are not out of place:

Hold patient's head and body bolt upright, sitting in a chair, feet on the floor. Bind a handkerchief, wide list or tape tightly round each arm and leg, close to the body to cut off return of blood to the head. Place the feet in a pail of hot water (kept hot by refilling) made strong with cayenne pepper, and thoroughly rub dry pepper on the legs, hands and arms, which can be done by means of a cloth or towel, to avoid escape of the excitant into the air. Let the person who supports the head, while steadying it with one hand, dip the other in cold water, both hands being kept thus constantly wet, and in contact with the forehead and whole brain (by no means neglecting the animal or motive brain behind), either as lying on the head or moving about on it, and so the whole head being kept wet and cold, though prevented dripping on the body by some sufficient protection round the neck, as a large towel, not allowed to heat the neck, yet stopping or catching the water; but this cold water is not to be used except at first for a time, when it is imperative to make an impression, and check the flow of blood from the rent vessels in the brain, but at length is to be exchanged for tepid and then warm water, to kill the reaction, and, by constant evaporation, leave the head permanently cold. Let other persons take the trunk in charge, vigorously and persistently plying its whole surface with their hands, the frictions, manipulations and magnetism all having this one effect, to draw the blood away from the brain, as well as now doing something far more important—revitalizing and restoring the body. All these things should have gone on together from the first moment—simultaneous prescribed handling of extremities, trunk, head—presently to be followed by inevitable return of consciousness, for no surcharge of blood in the brain could possibly hold out against such enforced persuasion. Binding the arms and legs alone would in time relieve the brain, the limbs turning purple, and swelling almost to bursting from having left the head actually destitute, the pallor of the face now calling for successive and gradual untying, first one arm, next the other, then in the same manner the legs, and last the feet, rubbed quickly and perfectly dry (to forestall the cold of evaporation) and the patient placed in bed to rest and recover. Binding the limbs a few moments before the stroke would have preit, so would lying with the head in the center of a horizontal revolving disk, whirling the blood to the feet, as this, too, by the same mechanical compulsion, would aid to cure. Of course, in the absence of any pepper, the great main effect would still have gone on.

### About Eating at Night.

A legend of ancient times, handed down from generation to generation, through century upon century, still obtains in almost every household to the effect that if one eats just before going to bed one will surely see one's grandmother. Now there seems to be something terrible about the appearance of this nocturnal grandmother, but as the writer never conversed with any one who had been subjected to one of her phantomic visits we are disposed to be incredulous, and flout the legend in the face of the bearer. However hungry one may be at bedtime, the temptation to satisfy the cravings of the appetite is always met by this "old wives' fable," and it always serves to bar the pantry door against an evening intrusion. There's no telling how much suffering has been brought about by this idea, and now we believe the time has come when hungry men, be it at bedtime or mealtime, ought to burst the legendary bonds which have thus far bound them and eat when they are hungry. To take a hearty meal on retiring is, of course, very injurious, because it is very likely to disturb one's rest and produce nightmare. However, a little food at this time, if one is hungry, is decidedly beneficial; it prevents the gnawing of an empty stomach, with its attendent restlessness and unpleasant dreams, to say nothing of the probable headache, or of nervous and other derangements, the next morning. One should no more lie down at night hungry than he should lie down after a full dinner, the consequence of either being disturbing and harmful. A cracker or two, a bit of bread and butter, cake, a little fruit—something to relieve the sense of vacuity, and so restore the tone of the system—is all that is necessary. We have known persons, habitual sufferers from restlessness at night, to experience material benefit, even though they were not hungry, by a very light luncheon before bedtime. In place of tossing about for two or three hours as formerly, they would soon grow drowsy, fall asleep, and not wake more than once or twice until sunrise. This mode of treating insomnia or sleeplessness has recently been recommended by several distinguished physicians, and the prescription has generally been attended with happy results.

### The Duration of Life.

The following facts on the duration of life appear in the *Deutsche Versicherungs Zeitung:* In ancient Rome, during the period between the years 200 and 300 A. D., the average duration of life among the upper classes was thirty years. In the present century, among the same classes of people, it amounts to fifty years. In the sixteenth century the mean duration of life in Geneva was 21.21 years, between 1814 and 1833 it was 40.68 years, and at the present time as many people live to seventy years of age as 300 years ago lived to the age of forty-three.

### It Passed.

"Five cents fare for that child, madam," said a street car conductor as he opened the door and put his head into the door.

"Very well," she replied, feeling in her pocket; "this is an orphan child and I'm its guardian. I must have a receipt for all moneys paid out, and as soon as you write one I'll drop a nickle in the box."

He shut the door and leaned over the brake like a man in deep thought.

### Items of Interest.

A Terre Haute babe, crawling around the floor, had an ear bit off by a pig.

It is said to require higher art to convey a delicate compliment than to utter a biting sarcasm.

A veteran shopkeeper says that, although his clerks are very talkative during the day, they are always ready to shut up at night.

They wondered at the short collection in a Missouri church, and investigated to find that one of the collectors had tar in the top of his hat.

The inhabitants of the Nicobar Islands, in the Bay of Bengal, are the only persons who had front seats at the total eclipse of the sun.

The most curious freak of one of the recent cyclones in Georgia was the driving of a hickory tree two feet in diameter four feet deeper into the ground.

Somebody sent to a lady in London an Easter egg which contained an African scorpion, by which interesting insect the lady was bitten so that she will probably die.

The greatest feat in eating ever recorded is told of a man who commenced by bolting a door, after which he threw up a window, and swallowed a whole story.

The saddest thing in life is the spectacle afforded by a young person who has burnt all her hair off her forehead with a hot slate pencil, and cannot afford to buy a row of curls.

The cavaliers, during the protectorate, were accustomed in their libations to put a crum of bread into a glass of wine, and before they drank it, say: "God send this Crumwell down."

No Irishman ever made a greater bull than the English lawyer who drew up an indictment charging that the prisoner killed a man with a certain wooden instrument called an iron pestle.

Epitaphs were discussed before a fellow of twenty five, who thought they were too complicated, and gave the following as what he would like to have on his tomb:

"JOHN THOMPSON, 1850-1950."

Mrs. J. J. Astor recently sent $750 to a children's aid society, to pay the fares of fifty-nine homeless boys to the West. The little fellows started, after being comfortably clothed and well fed, under one of the agents of the society.

The Narragansett Indians at Charlestown, R. I., held their annual town meeting a few days ago. The method of election consists in placing the two candidates some distance apart, after which the members of the tribe divide with the two men, and those in the majority are declared successful.

A physician of Saylorville, Ia., who was made the victim of a first of April hoax, by receiving a summons from a fictitious patient and traveling a considerable distance in haste to answer it, turned the tables on the jester by sending in to him a bill for professional services, and compelling payment, with costs, by process of law.

A smart young Bostonian offers to wager a considerable amount on his spelling. He says you can give him any word in the English language, in common use, or obsolete, technical, or otherwise, and he will spell it correctly the first time. Almost any smart New Yorker can do the same. "It" is not a difficult word to tackle orthographically.

Arsenic out West is considered as a remedy for hog cholera, and carelessness in using the poison frequently produces distressing accidents. Recently at Camp Chase, Ohio, a mother and ten children nearly lost their lives by eating bread in which arsenic, purchased as a medicine for stock, had become mixed. The drug was left lying loose on a shelf in the pantry.

There is not a drinking saloon in Hutchins, Iowa. There used to be four, but the widow of a man who froze to death after getting drunk in them sued the proprietors, and gained a verdict of $2,800 against each. The liquor business is becoming unprofitable in Iowa since the passage of the civil damage law. A similar law exists in New York, but is seldom enforced.

A convict in the Nashville penitentiary, who has been regarded as a dumb idiot for the two years during which he has suffered incarceration there, succeeded in evading the vigilance of his keepers the other evening, stole a suit of clothes and some money, and escaped. When he was recaptured a few hours afterward he had, in some singular manner, recovered both his speech and his reason.

### A New Goddess.

The Shanghai *Gazette*, alluding to the death of the late emperor of China, conveys the information that shortly before the emperor's death a gigantic image, the goddess of small-pox, was paraded round the city of Pekin in solemn procession, and then taken into the very bedroom of the dying youth, where it was worshiped and honored with many propitiatory offerings. As, however, the goddess continued obdurate, she was subjected to a severe thrashing and other insults, and finally burned. The fatal result of the attack was, we suppose, her revenge for the maltreatment.

POOR LITTLE SUFFERER.—A little daughter of Albert Williams, of Hartford, Conn., was fatally burned recently. While enduring intense suffering, says the *Post*, she spoke frequently to those at her bedside, and the following words show the current of her thoughts in her last moments: "Is my dolly burned?" "I want somebody to kiss me." "Somebody do kiss me." "I want my papa." "I wish I was dead and in heaven like Nellie Gridley." "I was always good and kind, wasn't I, papa?"

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.—A Wisconsin lady who attended many parties with Jefferson Davis when he was a young lieutenant, recently described him as very retiring and meditative, and always seemed to be contriving something, or thinking of something outside of the company. She suggested that she knows a lady in Wisconsin who might have been Mrs. Davis, and would have been but for her father's constantly telling her that an army officer was like a sailor, and had a lover in every port.